



City of Huntington Beach Planning Department **STUDY SESSION REPORT**

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Scott Hess, AICP, Director of Planning
BY: Jennifer Villaseñor, Associate Planner *JW*
DATE: April 22, 2008
SUBJECT: **GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 08-001 (LeBard School Site)**
LOCATION: 20451 Cramer Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92646 (East of the intersection of Brookhurst Street and Indianapolis Avenue)

PROJECT REQUEST AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 represents a request, pursuant to Section 65402 of the California Government Code, by the City of Huntington Beach to determine if acquisition of the LeBard School site is in compliance with the goals and policies of the General Plan should the City decide to acquire the site. Section 65402 of the Government Code provides that no real property shall be disposed of or acquired until the location, purpose and extent of the disposition or acquisition has been submitted to and reported upon as to its conformity with the City's adopted General Plan.

On April 7, 2008 the City Council approved a resolution authorizing City staff to pursue acquisition of all or part of the site. Subsequent to the April 7th City Council meeting, the Huntington Beach City School District (HBCSD) submitted a letter to the Planning Department requesting that a General Plan Conformance for the disposition of the LeBard School site be processed in conjunction with the City's General Plan Conformance for acquisition of the site.

CURRENT LAND USE, HISTORY OF SITE, ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS

The 10.12 acre site has not been used by the HBCSD for public education for many years; however, it is currently being utilized as the District's Education Center offices. The site is also used for organized youth sports as well as by residents of the surrounding neighborhood for general recreation and open space purposes. The table below identifies the current zoning and General Plan land use designations of the site and surrounding properties.

LOCATION	GENERAL PLAN	ZONING	LAND USE
Subject Property:	P (Public)	PS (Public/Semi-Public)	Closed school site; District Education Center; Recreational & sports playing fields
North, South and West of Subject Property:	RL (Residential – Low Density)	RL	Single-family residential uses
East of Subject Property:	OS-P (Open Space – Parks)	OS-PR (Open Space – Parks & Recreation)	LeBard Park

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINES

DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION:

April 9, 2008 (Date of Request)

MANDATORY PROCESSING DATE(S):

May 19, 2008 (40 days from date of request)

General Plan Conformance No 08-001 is scheduled as a non-public hearing item for Planning Commission consideration on May 13, 2008.

CEQA ANALYSIS/REVIEW

The General Plan conformance review is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15306, Class 6 of the California Environmental Quality Act, which states that information collection which does not result in major disturbance to an environmental resource is exempt from any environmental review.

COMMENTS FROM CITY DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES

No comments regarding General Plan Conformance No. 08-001 have been received from other City departments or agencies.

PUBLIC MEETINGS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

No public meetings have been held regarding this General Plan Conformance request. On April 9, 2008 a notice of the Huntington Beach City School District's intent to dispose of the school site was sent to all residents residing within ¼ mile of the school site.

PLANNING ISSUES

The only issue to consider as part of this request is the project's conformance to the City's General Plan. The disposition and acquisition of the LeBard School site is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City's General Plan and the Land Use Element designation of Public on the subject property. The following policy pertains to the disposition and acquisition of surplus school sites:

Land Use

LU Policy 13.1.6: *"Encourage surplus schools and other public properties to be made available first for other public purposes, such as parks, open space, adult or child care, and secondarily for reuse for private purposes and/or other land uses and development."*

This policy is consistent with State law in that the City and other public entities have priority to purchase or lease surplus school property. As a result, the City of Huntington Beach has opted to exercise the first opportunity right to consider purchasing and reusing the site for public purposes, such as a park or open space, with the City Council's recent authorization to pursue acquisition of the site. Should the City and other public entities with priority decline the offer to purchase the LeBard School site, the development of the site for private purposes with other land uses may be considered along with the approval of a general plan amendment and zoning map amendment.

In addition to this policy, the General Plan includes an implementation program specific to the disposition of surplus school sites.

ILU 26

“Upon receipt of an intention to dispose of a surplus school site, the City of Huntington Beach shall proceed in the following manner:

- a. Consult the Surplus School Property Purchasing Plan;*
- b. Inform the City Council and Planning Commission of the intent to dispose of surplus school property and of relevant State law;*
- c. Notify residents within a one-quarter mile radius of the impending sale;*
- d. Notify the school district of any intent to purchase the surplus property within the limits prescribed in Section 39394 of the State Education Code;*
- e. Determine the type and number of existing recreational programs that may be located on the surplus school site;*
- f. Determine the possible sites for relocation of the recreational programs and the possible impacts to the surrounding neighborhood;*
- g. Obtain from the School District, and give consideration to, information regarding the highest and best use of the property as if it were to be developed for a non-public purpose, defining the economic value of the property equivalent to the value the District could obtain through private land use and development of the property;*
- h. Compile and review demographic information showing the lack of need for the surplus school site.”*

City staff is currently addressing the above referenced steps. Items a, b, c and e have been completed, and the remaining items either require direction from the City Council or are contingent upon other items' completion.

In addition to the above-cited General Plan language regarding disposition of surplus school sites, there is a General Plan policy that addresses the issue of recreational opportunities at these sites.

Recreation and Community Service

RCS Policy 5.1.1:

“Review the parks and recreation facilities relationship with the local schools. The review should include:

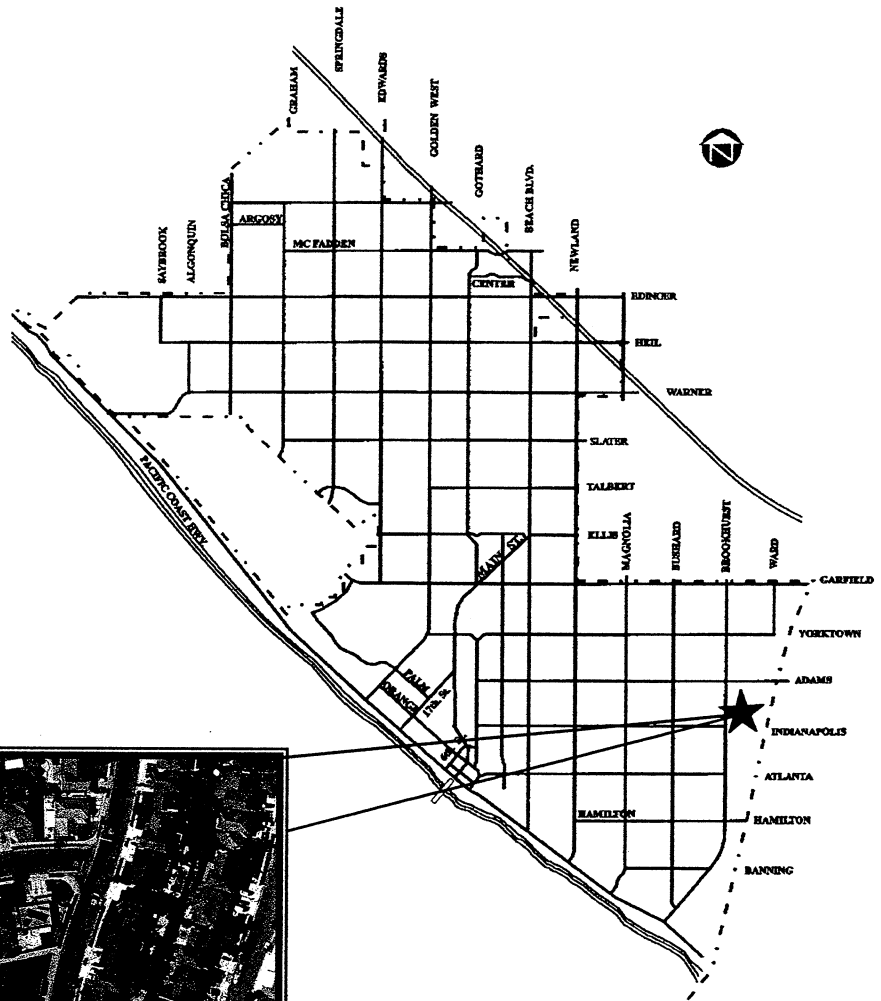
- a. the concept of providing both school recreation facilities and park facilities at the same site;*
- b. information submitted by the school districts regarding the financial and fiscal impacts to the school districts in preserving closed schools for park purposes without adequate compensation to the school district;*
- c. the determination of each school's contribution in providing recreational opportunities to the neighborhood; and*
- d. the identification of an “alternative” plan to provide the recreational opportunities in the event of a school closure.”*

The City of Huntington Beach does not operate any recreational programs at the subject site, but the Sea View Little League utilizes the playing fields year-round. The Surplus School Property Purchasing Plan, updated in November 2007, indicates that relocation of the existing playing fields to another City park would likely displace other recreational opportunities at that park. Community Services staff is evaluating alternative plans for the existing youth sports group if the property is sold and the existing recreational and open space is not preserved.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map – LeBard School Site
2. Letter from the Huntington Beach School District Requesting General Plan Conformance, dated April 9, 2008

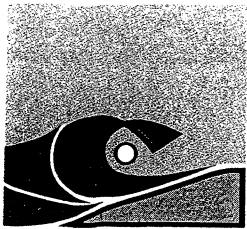
PROJECT SITE



VICINITY MAP

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE # 08-001
(LEBARD SCHOOL – 20451 CRAIMER LANE)
THE CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

ATTACHMENT NO. 1



HUNTINGTON BEACH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

20451 Cramer Lane, Huntington Beach, California 92646 (714) 964-8888

City of Huntington Beach

APR 09 2008

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April 8, 2008

Mr. Scott Hess, Planning Director
City of Huntington Beach
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

RE: Sale of the LeBard Site

Dear Mr. Hess:

It is my understanding that the City of Huntington Beach will be processing a general plan conformance regarding the sale of our LeBard site. Because it is the intention of our district to sell the LeBard site to the City of Huntington Beach, I am requesting that said general plan conformance take place at the same time such a sale would be consummated, if in fact this does occur.

Thank you for your attention in this matter and please call me with any questions you may have regarding this request.

Sincerely,

Michael Curran
Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Huntington Beach City School District

ATTACHMENT NO. 1